Remarks

Entry of the amendments, reconsideration of the application, as amended, and allowance of all pending claims are respectfully requested. Upon entry of the amendments, claims 1-3, 5, and 7-30 remain pending.

With the above amendments, applicants have amended the independent claims to further define the at least one parameter. In particular, applicants have added language to indicate that, in one embodiment, the at least one parameter used in the grouping is associated with at least one of performance and/or reliability of a storage medium. Support for this amendment can be found throughout the specification (e.g., paragraph 45, page 13; paragraph 52, page 15). Therefore, no new matter has been added.

Further, dependent claim 3 has been rewritten in independent form and has been amended to include the substance of dependent claims 4, 6 and 7. Thus, dependent claims 4 and 6 have been cancelled, without prejudice.

Dependent claim 7 has been amended to recite that the at least one parameter includes at least one of manufacture information and date of manufacture. Support for this amendment can be found throughout the specification (e.g., paragraph 83, page 24). Therefore, no new matter has been added.

In the Office Action, dated October 12, 2005, claims 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 13, 15, 21 and 29 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. Applicants gratefully acknowledge this indication of allowability and have rewritten claim 3 in independent form. Applicants have included the substance of claims 4, 6 and 7 in this claim, in an effort to minimize the number of independent claims in this application. At this time, applicants have not rewritten the other allowed claims in independent form, but reserve the right to do so at a later date.

In addition to the above, claims 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 16-20, 22 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticiapted by Humlicek et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,822,782); and claims 24-28 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over

Humlicek. Applicants respectfully, but most strenuously, traverse these rejections for the reasons herein.

Applicants' invention is directed, in one aspect, to the grouping of storage media based on parameters associated with the storage media. As examples, the storage media are grouped based on performance and/or reliability of the storage media.

In one particular example (e.g., independent claim 1), applicants recite a method of grouping storage media. The method includes, for instance, obtaining parameter information for one or more parameters associated with a plurality of storage media; and grouping at least a portion of storage media of the plurality of storage media into one or more groups of storage media based on at least one parameter of the one or more parameters, wherein said at least one parameter is associated with at least one of performance of a storage medium and reliability of a storage medium. Thus, in this aspect of applicants' claimed invention, the grouping is based on performance and/or reliability of a storage medium. This is very different from the teachings of Humlicek.

Humlicek describes a technique for maintaining RAID configuration information on disks of a RAID array. In particular, Humlicek teaches identifying which drive is in a particular group and using that information to make a catalog of the groups to help with reconfiguration. This is explicitly described in, for instance, the Abstract of Humlicek, in which is stated:

> The configuration and identification information is
> generated and written to each disk drive in the disk array
> when the particular disk drive is configured so as to be
> added or deleted from groups of the subsystem. Upon
> subsystem reset (e.g. power on reset or other reset
> operations), the RAID controller in the subsystem
> determines the proper configuration of the RAID groups....

Humlicek describes the storing of identification information on each disk drive to improve the speed and flexibility of initializing and reconfiguring the subsystem. This identification information includes a unique identifier of the disk drive, and group configuration information that describes the drives in a particular group (see, e.g., Col. 3, lines 1-15).

Humlicek, however, does not describe, teach or suggest grouping of the storage media based on at least one parameter that is associated with performance and/or reliability of a storage medium, as claimed by applicants. That is, there is no discussion in Humlicek of grouping of storage media based on performance and/or reliability. Instead, in Humlicek, catalogued information is used to know which drives are in which groups. Further, logic is used to determine if drives have been added or removed, and groups are reconfigured based on this knowledge. There is no description, teaching or suggestion of grouping based on performance or reliability, as claimed by applicants. Thus, applicants respectfully submit that Humlicek does not anticipate or render obvious applicants' claimed invention.

For at least the above reasons, applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1 and the other independent claims are patentable over Humlicek. Further, the dependent claims are patentable for the same reasons as the independent claims, as well as for their own additional features. Therefore, applicants respectfully request an indication of allowability for all pending claims.

Should the Examiner wish to discuss this case with applicants' attorney, please contact applicants' attorney at the below listed number.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: January 12, 2006.

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